



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITY CONTROL

THE ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

House Bill No. 6403: AAC UTILITY TERMINATION FOR HOUSEHOLDS WITH A MEMBER LESS THAN TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS OLD

March 8, 2011

Testimony of the Department of Public Utility Control

The Department of Public Utility Control (Department or DPUC) shares and understands the issues that give rise to the provisions of House Bill No. 6403. Each year the DPUC interacts with thousands of utility customers on issues such as this. In 2010 for example, the Department recorded more than \$80,000,000 in uncollectible charges for Connecticut Light & Power and United Illuminating customers. The Department notes that the Legislature has enacted substantial and broad protections to safeguard those individuals and families who face termination of utility services due to financial difficulties.

Current law, Conn. Gen. Stat. § 16-262c provides an almost blanket prohibition against utility service terminations during the winter months for individuals demonstrating financial hardship. In addition, current law also provides for a prohibition against utility service termination at any time of the year for a residential customer who has financial hardship and for whom the service termination would cause a life threatening situation for him/herself or a household member. To the extent that the proposal would provide an additional and unequivocal prohibition in all households where a child under twenty-four months of age resides, the Department asks the Committee to consider that there may be some additional financial exposure borne by all other ratepayers. The Department also suggests that the Committee consider what specific criteria should be utilized by the utilities in terms of identifying household composition for those eligible for the relief specified in the bill.

The Department looks forward to working with the Committee to address the issues presented by this proposal.